

Share a Smoke With Me by youweremovingyourfeet (rosebud221B)

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Summary:

Nancy didn't want to go to this party, and now she's crying outside and Billy Hargrove's here.

Share a Smoke With Me

Author's Note:

This is my first entry into this fandom, so hi!

I will probably post mostly Harringrove in the future, so if you're not into that, stay away lol

I exist on tumblr under the same pseud, youweremovingyourfeet, so head over there for some harringrove bullshit

Nancy knew the party was a bad idea.

She had known from the minute that Ally invited her, from the next minute where Jonathan agreed that it was a good idea because “You should hang out with your friends, Nance. You need to get out more, just be normal for a bit.”

Like she hadn’t heard that one before. Like it didn’t cut to the core to hear it again.

Jonathan couldn’t even come with her. Will was having a bad day again. A day where he saw the Mind Flayer in the walls and the floors and behind his eyelids. They would come and go, those bad days, and this one was bad enough that Joyce was worried he might hurt himself and she had to work late. Even though all Nancy wanted was to spend time with Jon, she knew Will needed to just be around family on bad days, and she respected that. The poor kid had been through enough.

It didn't make this party a good place to go, but Ally had called her house asking where she was, and then her mother insisted, telling her to "Say hi to her mother for me!" like she was going over for family dinner, not a raging house party.

So here she was, at least slightly drunk and very cold, outside the house, listening to the music thumping, and wondering how the fuck she was going to get home. She didn't even have a car, which sucked for going to these stupid parties.

Thinking of that led to thinking about Barb, and how 'hanging out with her friends' used to mean sitting on Barb's couch talking for hours and watching shitty movies with her mother. How she used to have someone who she loved unconditionally, like a sister.

Thinking about Barb when she was drunk always led to crying, and that's how Billy Hargrove, of all fucking people, found her.

She'd never really talked to him, only heard about him in passing. Heard from the kids about how he was the absolute worst, and how he almost killed Steve, and how mean he was to Max (that one usually came from Dustin or Lucas). Lately though, she'd heard something different. She'd been at the Byers' for dinner when Lucas radioed in saying Billy Hargrove had apologized to him, sounding incredibly confused. She'd overheard Mike and Will talking about how he'd apologized to Steve.

So really, she didn't know what to expect when he sat down next to her. She turned away, wiping her face a little.

“What do you want, Hargrove?”

“Just out for a smoke. You want one?” He seemed ready to ignore the tears, so she played along, even if it was a pity cig.

“Why the fuck not.”

“Princess Wheeler, swearing and smoking. Never thought I’d see the day.” His smile was always too much, predatory around the edges. She could see how girls fell for it. She could also see that it was fake.

“You don’t know shit about me, Hargrove.” She put the cig in her mouth, let him light it for her, brushed her hair and tears away.

It had been a while. She could feel the burn of the smoke in her lungs. Different from marijuana (Thank you Jonathan), sharper and hotter. She could see how someone like Billy Hargrove could go through so many a day.

They sat there like that for a while, blowing smoke and visible breath into the February air. Nancy liked that, the quiet of it all. Everyone else seemed ready to jump down her throat at the first hint of emotion she showed, from her mother to Jonathan to even Joyce at this point. Hargrove, asshole though he might be, at least gave her some space.

“Where’s your boy, Wheeler? I thought you were attached at the hip.”

“We’re not. He’s at his house. I’ve heard you’ve been there.” She raised an eyebrow at him, looking him full in the face for the first time.

“Yea, I have. Not proud of what happened there, in case you were wondering.”

“I wasn’t.” It was surprising though, that he would own that to someone he’d never officially met, someone so close to people that hated him. Maybe it was the alcohol, or the quiet night, that made him chatty.

“I was just thinking about my friend, in case you were wondering.”

“I wasn’t. Barb, right?”

“Yea. She died at a party just like this.” Nancy was amazed she could get that sentence out without tearing up. Maybe it was the alcohol.

“Harrington’s place, right? Something about the pool?”

“How’d you know?”

“He might have told me. We talk. Sometimes.” Steve had never mentioned that. Why would he, though? They hardly ever really

talked anymore, not since he told her to go with Jonathan. Thinking about him made her feel guilty. She had a lot to feel guilty about now.

“Yea, it was at Steve’s party. Which was why I didn’t want to go to this, and Jonathan was supposed to come with me, and...” She trails off, breathing hard and feeling the sharp press of tears behind her eyes again.

“I wasn’t looking out for her, and now she’s gone, and nothing I do can ever take that back.” Those were words she’d been looking to say since that night when she’d learned there was no hope, that she couldn’t save her best friend.

Billy said nothing for a while. Again, she was stupidly grateful. Anyone else would have told her it wasn’t her fault.

“You never stop believing it’s your fault. That doesn’t change, and anyone who tells you it isn’t won’t change your mind.” His voice has gone quiet, hoarse around the edges. Nancy wonders how he knows, who he’s lost. The grief in his voice makes it real, makes her pay attention to him. He’s not pretending. Not right now.

They observe each other a moment, blue to blue, making real eye contact for the first time. Recognizing the similarity.

Nancy breaks first, blowing smoke away from both of them. Out of courtesy. He is sharing with her, after all. In more ways than one it seems.

“My mom, she got shot. Mugging gone wrong. I was 10.” He says this in a detached, weary tone.

“You don’t have to-“

“No, you need to know. You can try to leave this behind, but it’s going to walk beside you forever. Might as well make peace now. Let yourself remember the fucking good parts.”

“How good are you at that?”

He smirks, looking genuinely amused.

“Not very.”

That sounds about right. Nancy nods, smiling.

They finish their cigs in silence, but it’s a more comfortable kind. Friendly, even. ‘Shared trauma’ and all that shit.

“Wheeler, you need a ride? Don’t see your boy coming to pick you up.”

“That’d be nice, Billy. And for fuck’s sake, call me Nancy. Leave your last name pissing contest for Steve.” This makes him laugh a little, a real laugh.

“I see what he saw in you. You’ve got fire.” And there’s something there, in Billy’s eyes, that seems a little wistful. A little jealous. Nancy wonders if everyone’s got his intentions towards Steve all backward.

Or maybe she’s just paying attention.

She takes his hand up, and walks behind him to his car, wondering about Billy, wondering what to tell Jonathan, wondering what to tell Steve.

“Hey Billy.”

“What?”

“You wanna split a smoke again sometime?”